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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

May 31, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TIM GRIFFIN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

ALFALIT: EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS THROUGH LITERACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize an amazing organization headquartered in my south Florida district, Alfalit International.

Alfalit is a faith-based nonprofit organization that provides education for the world's poorest people. Alfalit offers many programs—basic education, preschool, nutrition, microcredit, and community development—but its core

mission is to eliminate the human suffering caused by illiteracy. Alfalit is active in 24 countries, in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and in Portugal. As you would see from these posters here, Mr. Speaker, these are the volunteers and the many participants in Alfalit literacy programs throughout the world.

Since its founding in 1961, 7 million individuals have had their lives transformed by Alfalit because it also provides comprehensive health programs that focus on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and cholera prevention. This year marks its 50th year of service to the world's most vulnerable population, 50 years of empowering individuals through literacy. It is an impressive achievement, and yet Alfalit knows that there is still much more to be done.

Worldwide, 774 million adults lack the ability to read and write. Think of that staggering number—774 million adults. That is one in five adults throughout the world who are illiterate, with two-thirds of them being women. In addition, 75 million children have never had the opportunity to go to school, and many attend infrequently or they decide to drop out.

As a former Florida certified teacher, I know the importance of a quality education. It is one of the best ways to ensure that a child will have a stable and productive future. Literacy helps bring communities together, and it helps prevent violence and poverty. Last year, Alfalit had over 120,000 students enrolled in its programs, students like the ones that we see here in these posters.

Alfalit is always striving to reach more people, and that is why it has started an adult and youth education program in Liberia. They have opened facilities in 10 of Liberia's 15 counties, quite an impressive achievement. Liberia's President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, has become involved with Alfalit's pro-

gram. Program participants in Liberia say that Alfalit has taken them from darkness to light. They say that before, they could not read a simple street sign or know what a danger sign meant. But now they truly see everything.

The Women in Peace Building of Liberia have been active participants in the program that Alfalit offers them. It is a group of Christian women activists that formed during the Liberian civil war. They come together to pray and discuss issues of concern for their fellow Liberians. Alfalit has provided them with the know-how and with the confidence to continue their work.

After 50 years of service and dedication, Alfalit has built a legacy that is truly impressive.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Alfalit for all that it has done to fight illiteracy and ignorance throughout our world. Let's hear it for Alfalit and 50 years more of service.

THE MCGOVERN-JONES AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, like most of my colleagues, I had the opportunity to speak to a number of veteran groups on Memorial Day in my district. As always, I was very humbled when I stand before those who have fought for this Nation and the families whose loved ones did not come back from wars.

I would like the House to know that when I talked about the McGovern-Jones amendment to get our troops out of Afghanistan, the statement received very strong applause, showing the very strong support of the veterans of the Third District for getting our troops home from Afghanistan. After my comments, I had many of these veterans come up individually who wanted to

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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talk to me, expressing their support and telling me that they agree with McGovern and myself.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the 26 Republicans who voted in favor of the McGovern-Jones amendment last week. I believe we came within 11 votes of passage. Mr. McGovern and I will continue to fight until there's a definite plan to bring our troops home before 2015.

Bin Laden is gone, and there is zero al Qaeda presence in Afghanistan. We have done our job.

In closing, I would like to quote Leslie Gelb from his May 9 article in *The Wall Street Journal*: "Afghanistan is no longer a war about vital American security interests. It is about the failure of America's political elites to face two plain facts: The al Qaeda terrorist threat is no longer centered in that ancient battleground, and the battle against the Taliban is mainly for Afghans themselves."

Mr. Speaker, I have with me, as I have many times—the true cost of war is those who die, and those who lose their arms and legs, and those who are paralyzed and blind for the rest of their life. Beside me is a very, very frank picture of war. It is an Air Force honor guard at Dover Air Force Base with the officer in charge saluting the transfer case that is covered with the American flag.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, to both parties, how many more have to die in the next 4 or 5 years before we as a Nation and we as a Congress wake up to the fact that Karzai is a corrupt leader? He has a corrupt government. We are spending \$8.2 billion a month to prop him up. And yet, Mr. Speaker, on this floor of this House, I've been part of many, many debates where people are saying, well, we've got to cut the senior citizens, we can't keep their programs going; we've got to cut the children so they can't get milk in the morning at school.

We make sure that Karzai gets his \$8.2 billion every month in Afghanistan for what we can't even account for.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. McGovern and I will again this summer have an amendment on the floor to bring our troops home from Afghanistan. And I will say to the moms, the dads, the wives, and the husbands who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan, you have won the war. The war is over. Bin Laden is dead, and al Qaeda does not exist in Afghanistan anymore.

So, Mr. Speaker, before I close, as I do always on the floor, as I look at this poster with the flag-draped coffin, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I will ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I will ask God, in His loving arms, to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. I will ask God to please bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for His people and this great Nation. I will ask God to please

give wisdom, strength, and courage to President Obama, that he will do what is right in the eyes of God for this Nation.

And I will say three times, God please, God please, God please continue to bless America.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Almighty God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We pray in thanksgiving for the thousands of men and women our Nation honored this past weekend who have given so much of themselves to the service of our Nation. Grant them, living and dead, the peace of Your presence.

We ask Your blessing as well upon the men and women of this, the people's House. May they strive with all their energy and good will to serve our Nation, to work on legislative solutions to the challenges we face in this time, always mindful that they are entrusted especially with the well-being of so many who are powerless. We know, O God, these little ones are of special interest and concern for You.

Bless us this day and every day. And may all that is done within these hallowed Halls be done for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. CRAVAACK) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CRAVAACK led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

REPORT ON H.R. 2055, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2012

Mr. CULBERSON, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-94) on the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

HOUSTON POLICE OFFICER KEVIN WILL

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, peace officers are the last strand of wire in the fence between the law and the lawless. They go forward each day to protect the people and risk their own lives doing so.

Very early Sunday morning, one of Houston's finest, Officer Kevin Will, was investigating a hit-and-run accident when he was run over and killed by a speeding vehicle that had blazed past police barriers. Immediately before being struck, Officer Will yelled for an accident witness to jump out of the way, thus saving the citizen's life just before the officer's life was stolen from him.

Officer Will was 38 years of age and had been a Houston police officer 2 years. He leaves behind a pregnant wife and two step-children.

The driver of the speeding vehicle ignored the safety lights of police cruisers at the accident scene. He was drunk, charged with intoxication, manslaughter of a police officer, evading arrest, and possession of cocaine. The accused killer was in the United States illegally, having been deported at least once before returning to become one of the lawless.

And that's just the way it is.

OUR PRESENT MONETARY SYSTEM: WORKING FOR A FEW AT THE EXPENSE OF THE MANY

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Why are we in debt? We borrow trillions for wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, trillions for tax cuts for the rich. We borrow billions from China and Japan.

We have plenty of money for war, Wall Street, and welfare for the wealthy; but when millions of honest Americans need jobs, need wage increases, need health care, need education, need retirement security, they're told no, we don't have the money.